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Claim Amendments

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method for outputting recommended preferences, the method executing-to be executed on a computer system, wherein the computer system includes a processor, a database, an first input device and an output device, and wherein the database includes a plurality of datafiles each containing a plurality of predetermined preferences, the method comprising:

accepting signals from the first input device to indicate a plurality of user preferences;

comparing at least a subset of the user preferences against the plurality of datafiles in the database to identify matching datafiles, each matching datafile containing preferences matching at least a threshold number of the indicated user preferences;

selecting preferences from the identified datafiles, wherein the selected preferences do not match the user preferences; and

outputting, by means of via the output device, the selected preferences.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the preferences comprise is-an artists's names.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the preferences comprise is the-movie titles-of-a-movie.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the computer system further includes a data communications network, a first user input device, and a second user input device, wherein the processor, database, first user input device, second user input device and output device are coupled to the network, and wherein the first and second user input devices are remotely located from each other.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein selecting preferences further comprises:

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(a) — for each non-unmatching preference in the identified datafiles, determining a number umber of other preferences in the identified datafiles that match the non-unmatching preference and assigning the determined number to the preference; and

(b) — selecting one or more non-unmatching preferences with the highest assigned numbers.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the number of preferences in a datafile is limited to 10, and wherein the first threshold number is 5.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the number of preferences in a datafile is limited to 10, and wherein only those unmatching preferences that also appear in 50% or more of the identified data files are selected ~~in (b)~~.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) A method for recommending music selections based on a user's preferred music selections, the method comprising :

storing a plurality of associated music selections in at the database;

accepting signals from an the input device to indicate a plurality of a user's preferred music selections;

determining that a number of the preferred music selections match with the associated music selections in the database;

determining a number of unmatched associated music selections in the database; and

outputting, ~~by means of the via an~~ output device, the unmatched associated music selections.

10. (Currently amended) An apparatus for recommending music selections based on a user's preferred music selections, the apparatus comprising:

a computer system including a database;

means for storing a plurality of associated music selections in the database;

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means for accepting signals from ~~at the~~ user input device to indicate a plurality of a user's preferred music selections;

means for determining that a number of the preferred music selections match with the associated music selections in the database; and

means for determining ~~at the~~-number of unmatched associated music selections in the database.

11. (Currently amended) A method for outputting an ordered list of recommended objects based on an input object, the method comprising:

storing pairs of ranked objects in ~~at the~~-database;

assigning a ranking number to each of the pairs of ranked objects and storing the ranking number in association with the pair;

accepting signals from ~~an~~~~the~~ input device to indicate an object;

using ~~at the~~ processor to find occurrences of the selected object in the pairs of ranked objects;

for each pair in which the selected object occurs, determining a non-matching object in the pair that does not match the selected object;

ordering non-matching objects into a list according to the ranking number for the pair that the non-matching object belongs to; and

outputting the list as an ordered list of recommended objects.

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein each object comprises is an artist's name.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein each object comprises is the a title of a movie.

14. (Currently amended) An apparatus for outputting an ordered list of recommended objects based on an input object, the apparatus comprising:

~~a computer system including a processor, and;~~

a database accessible coupled to the processor;

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pairing means, ~~coupled to the processor~~, for storing pairs of ranked objects in the database;

ranking means for assigning a ranking number to each of the pairs of ranked objects and storing a given ranking number in association with a given stored pair;

input means, ~~coupled to the processor~~, for accepting signals from a human user to indicate a selected object;

finding means for finding occurrences of the selected object in the pairs of ranked objects;

determining means for determining, for each pair, an object in the pair that does not match the selected object;

ordering means for ordering non-matching objects into a list according to the ranking number for the pair that the non-matching object belongs to; and

output means, ~~coupled to the processor~~, for outputting the list as an ordered list of recommended objects.

15. (Currently amended) In a multi-user computer system that provides user access to a database of objects, a method of recommending objects to a user, the method comprising:

(a) generating on the remote computer, a data structure which stores groupings of objects known to be of interest to a community of users;

(b) identifying on the remote computer, a first set of objects that are ~~known~~determined to be of interest to a first user;

(c) accessing the data structure on the remote computer to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects having at least a threshold measure of containing similarities in common with the first set of objects;

(d) generating a combined set of objects from the identified one or more corresponding sets of objects; and

(e) providing to the user computer, at least one of the combined set of objects generated in (d).

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein a copy of the first set of objects is contained within the data structure.

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17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the database of objects comprises a plurality of digital audio selections.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the first set of objects are identified based upon user input.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) The method of claim 15, wherein accessing the data structure to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects containing similarities with the first set of objects comprises accessing the data structure to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects.

21. (Currently amended) In a multi-user computer system ~~The method of claim 15, wherein the multi-user computer system includes~~ a remote computer communicatively coupled via a network to a plurality of user computers ~~to provide user access to a database of objects, a method comprising and wherein the method further comprises;~~

~~generating the data structure on the remote computer, a data structure which stores groupings of objects known to be of interest to a community of users;~~

~~identifying the first set of objects on the remote computer in response to received user input on the user computer, a first set of objects that are known to be of interest to a first user;~~

~~accessing the data structure on the remote computer to identify the one or more corresponding sets of objects;~~

~~generating at the combined set of objects from the identified one or more corresponding sets of objects on the remote computer; and~~

~~providing at least one of the combined set of objects to the user computer for playback by the user computer.~~

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22-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently amended) A machine readable medium having stored thereon machine executable instructions, which when executed operate to implement a method comprising:

- (a)-generating a data structure which stores groupings of objects known to be of interest to a community of users;
- (b)-identifying a first set of objects of interest to a first user;
- (c)-accessing the data structure to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects having at least a threshold measure of containing similarities in common with the first set of objects;
- (d)-generating a combined set of objects from the identified one or more corresponding sets of objects; and
- (e)-providing at least one of the combined set of objects generated in (d).

26. (Previously presented) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein a copy of the first set of objects is contained within the data structure.

27. (Previously presented) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein said objects comprise a plurality of digital audio selections.

28. (Previously presented) The machine readable medium of claim 25, wherein the first set of objects are identified based upon user input.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently amended) The machine readable medium of claim 2529, wherein accessing the data structure to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects containing similarities with the first set of objects comprises accessing the data structure to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects.

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31-35. (Canceled)

36. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9, wherein determining that a number of the preferred music selections match with the associated music selections in the database comprises determining that a number of preferred digital audio music titles match digital audio music titles stored in the database.

37. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 10, further comprising means for outputting the unmatched associated music selections.

38. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the recommended each objects comprise is an artist's names.

39. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein a copy of the first set of objects is contained within the data structure.

40. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the database of objects comprises a plurality of digital audio selections.

41. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the first set of objects are identified based upon user input.

42. (New) In a multi-user computer system that provides user access to a database of objects, a method of recommending objects to a user, the method comprising:

generating on the remote computer, a data structure which stores groupings of objects known to be of interest to a community of users;

identifying on the remote computer, a first set of objects that are known to be of interest to a first user;

accessing the data structure on the remote computer to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects having at least a threshold measure of similarities in common with the first set of objects; and

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providing, to the user computer at least one of the one or more corresponding sets of objects.

43. (New) The method of claim 42, wherein accessing the data structure to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects containing similarities with the first set of objects comprises accessing the data structure to identify one or more corresponding sets of objects having at least some dissimilarities with respect to the first set of objects.

44. (New) The method of claim 42, wherein the database of objects comprises a plurality of digital audio selections.